

Meeting Summary

RRT I Meeting

October 27-28, 2004

Portsmouth, NH

RRT 1 website: <http://www.uscg.mil/d1/staff/m/rrt/rrt1.html>

Introductions were made by Rick Berry of NH DES, Art Johnson, EPA Co-chair, and Scott Lundrigen, Alternate USCG Co-Chair. The intended Regional Interagency Steering Committee (RISC) component of a combined RRT/RISC meeting is not being held due to FEMA hurricane operations.

The Co-Chairs introduced new RRT coordinators, EPA RRT Coordinator Melanie Morash and USCG RRT Coordinator LTJG Barry Breslin. The coordinators provided a logistics and meeting overview, and distributed a list of EPA training courses for FY05. Locations for the training courses have yet to be determined. If agencies are interested in hosting trainings or providing comments for future RRT meetings, contact Pauline Callahan at EPA at 617-918-1192.

Public Service Recognition Coast Guard personnel from the District, MSO Portland, Sector Boston, and MSO Providence presented Steve Lehmann, NOAA's Scientific Support Coordinator for New England, with the USCG Meritorious Public Service Award.

Oil Spill Seminar Summary The 8th Annual Northeast Regional Oil Spill Seminar, held prior to the RRT meeting, was summarized by Steve Lehmann. The seminar focused on the Selection Guide for Oil Spill Response Technologies, Coastal and Inland In-Situ Burning and Surface Washing Agents. The Selection Guide is a tool for responders to identify alternative response techniques when conventional measures (e.g., booming, skimming, etc.) would pose additional harm to the environment. It provides a means to document the decision-making process. While the guide distributed at the seminar can serve as a tool and reference for OSCs, a recommendation was made to further investigate RRT adoption of the guide. Contact Steve Lehmann if interested in participating in an RRT workgroup on this topic. The first action item for the workgroup is development of a workplan, likely to include: educating the RRT members as to the content of the Selection Guide, incorporating the Selection Guide as a response tool for Region I OSCs, and developing a Region I-specific Volume II of the Selection Guide.

DNC After Action Discussion

Art Johnson presented EPA lessons from the DNC. The EPA's DNC After-Action Report will be distributed to the RRT via email. Pre-planning began 18 months prior to the event and included upgrades to staff and equipment. Emergency procedures training took place during the week of DNC. The DNC was viewed as a training opportunity to exercise emergency response procedures. EPA personnel were deployed to Marine Safety Office (MSO) Boston, FEMA Regional Operations Center (ROC), Boston Emergency

Operations Center (EOC), Boston Police HQ, EPA's Regional Response Center (RRC), EPA's alternate RRC (Chelmsford Lab), FBI Joint Operations Center (JOC), and the Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MACC). Other assets were also pre-deployed, including sampling and response personnel, plume modeling and GIS groups, Trace Atmospheric Gas Analyzer (TAGA) buses and aircraft for air-monitoring, etc. The EPA used WebEOC to communicate and relay incident-specific information between various response centers. They practiced using SCRIBE – electronic system for managing environmental data. The challenge of working with the Secret Service and multiple command centers was noted. The EPA lessons-learned include interagency coordination, additional ICS training, and addressing/evaluating responder stress and fatigue associated with 12-hr shift schedule: 2pm-2am, and 2am-2pm.

Gary Perlman of ATSDR continued the discussion of DNC Report with regards to Department of Health and Human Services support during DNC, including cooperation with FEMA/NDMS, CDC liaison role, and Incident Management Team use.

John Fitzgerald of MADEP also discussed the DNC Report focusing on the need for deployed personnel at the EPA RRC to provide response support to EPA, primarily in ensuring coverage for responses or intentional spills outside the Metro area designed to draw away DNC response elements. The MADEP established satellite offices, augmented emergency on-call personnel, and continued with normal response operations.

LCDR Joe Higgins of USCG Sector Boston delivered the USCG DNC After Action Report. He stated they conducted waterside security operations and training exercises. They exercised new technology (port cameras and GIS systems). Success was based on pre-event planning, existing agency partnerships, implementation of ICS, and augmenting existing personnel with support corps. Working with Secret Service and the use of multiple command posts posed a challenge for Sector Boston, although the Coast Guard led the effort to ensure at least waterside operations fell under a single Unified Command. Although useful, not all of the new technology performed up to expectations. Lessons learned included better management of media inquiries to minimize disruption to command post. Also identified was the problem of funding pre-deployments for events.

M/V STELLAMARE Response was discussed by LCDR Hermes-Sanchez of Activities NY. On Dec. 9, 2003 a heavy-lift vessel capsized during loading of 240-ton “stators” in Albany, NY, killing three crewmembers, and subsequently discharging No. 2 and No. 6 oil, which was contained by boom and ice in the Hudson River. Surveys conducted by air verified little to no downstream contamination. 9,300 gallons of oil were recovered. Immediately following the capsizing, Port Authority assumed command and directed filling of initial ICS roles. Search and rescue/recovery operations were conducted to rescue 19 crew, with searches for the three deceased crewmembers continuing for several weeks. ICS was implemented as the response organizational structure. A Unified Command was established along with an Incident Command Post in a nearby port building. This incident produced a very high public interest, which lead to some media disruptions at the command center. Several press briefings were conducted at which the Unified Command presented a unified face to the media and to the public.

The Coastal Response Research Center, at the University of New Hampshire, discussed their mission of reducing the impact of spills on the environment by developing new approaches to spill preparedness, response, assessment, restoration and communication. Carol-Ann Manen of NOAA discussed the CRRC's mission as well as the partnership between NOAA's Office of Response and Restoration (ORR) and UNH to pursue research and development related to oil spills through a grant program.

M/V RIO PUELO Incident Response was discussed by LCDR Hermes-Sanchez provided an overview of the month-long RIO PUELO response addressing an anonymous threat of a biological agent onboard a container ship; details of this presentation are intentionally excluded from the minutes.

National Response Plan (NRP)/National Incident Management System (NIMS) Update was discussed by LCDR Bates of USCG HQ. LCDR Bates provided an update on the forward progress of the NRP and NIMS toward approval, providing the expected timeline while noting that much is fluid as the plan and system are finalized. NRP and NIMS development continues to improve multiagency coordination to provide a unified, standardized approach to federal responses to incidents of national significance under the "NRP Coordination Structure," with the Incident Command System (ICS) as the underlying organizational structure at the field-level. The NRP Coordination Structure includes:

The Joint Field Office (JFO), a focal point for coordination of federal support to on-scene management efforts; a JFO Coordination Group; a Unified Command which includes the PFO as well as federal, state and tribal officials; JFO Coordination Staff; a Safety, Liaison, Security, External Affairs and Defense Coordinating Officers; Office of Inspector General; and JFO Sections (Operations, Planning, Logistics and Finance).

NRP national rollout activities are planned from Nov '04 to Jan '05, and all agencies are asked to participate. Activities included are education and training for responders and stakeholders in: Miami, New York City, Chicago, Seattle, and Los Angeles. Initial Awareness level training online and CD-ROM will be available at the time the NRP is released. The NRP requirement states agencies will have 120 days from NRP roll-out to amend interagency response plans (such as the NCP) to align with NRP. NRT is beginning to review NCP to identify necessary changes.

WebEOC was discussed by Jim Hall of FEMA. Web EOC was selected by FEMA following review of a series of packages by the Naval Underwater Warfare Center. It is a common communications software for responding agencies, and facilitated for the rapid sharing of incident information through use by EPA and Boston EMA during the DNC. Web EOC has many benefits: it is Mobile, so the only requirement is Internet access; it allows an unlimited # of users; it contains all ICS forms, usable on PDAs. A regional purchase of WebEOC for regional use of federal agencies and partnering states, localities, etc. was proposed. The Co-chairs will highlight the importance of common response technologies in response, such as WebEOC, to the NRT for possible work at the March '05 NRT/RRT co-chairs meeting or the coming year.

Agency Reports

Rhode Island DEM reported that in Oct '04, vandalism by 4 students at the New England Gas storage facility resulted in theft of mercury and ultimate release at an apartment complex and at Shea High School. Residents in the area relocated to a hotel during the initial clean-up operations. Clean-up is currently on going.

Massachusetts DEP reported on the DEP's DNC preparation. The EPA organized training for federal and state responders in preparation for the Oct EPA-led PREP exercise, in which the DEP participated. The exercise scenario was a 10,000-gallon oil release to the Quabbin Reservoir due to a train derailment. The lesson learned was that incoming responders had difficulty integrating into the existing response structure. The MA Oil Spill Act has been passed; the working on regulation can be viewed at www.mass.gov/dep/bwsc/spillact.htm.

New Hampshire DES reported on preparedness activities in summer '04: exercises at Portsmouth, New Boston and Guilford involving terrorist scenarios, and Pisquataqua River Co-op training. NH Hospitals are upgrading capabilities to include decon and interoperability. Radios were purchased for local and state fire departments. The DES has moved into a coastal Portsmouth facility at 15 International Drive with a dedicated command center for coastal responses. Their goal is to add 2 HAZMAT teams to NH, for a total of 10.

USCG Group/MSO Long Island Sound reported on preparedness activities for TOPOFF 3. They are offering up to ICS 300-level training for federal, state and local agencies between November and March 2005. They will be having an Area Contingency Plan meeting in Nov 2005 on the subject of the Buckeye Pipeline spill, a spill of mixed oil products (40,000 gal) which impacted utility lines.

USCG MSO Providence reported on their Mercury release activities and the planning for upcoming Providence PREP exercise with MOTIVA.

USCG MSO Portland Captain Garrity led the RRT in a Red Sox tribute. Vessel spills due to non-functioning oil/water separator are resulting in criminal investigations. The Queen Mary 2 arrival will be used as an opportunity for exercising with city, state and fed responders.

USCG Sector Boston reports that the USCG is working with MADEP on Massachusetts Tanker Legislation. The issue of federal pre-emption remains on going. The Distrigas facility in Everett will be receiving LNG tankers every 5-7 days. Offshore gas facilities east/southeast of Boston are being proposed. A "Hub-Line" subsurface gas pipeline is proposed in the Boston area; however, subsurface conditions offshore in New England pose unique challenges for laying offshore pipelines.

EPA RRT Co-Chair discussed the re-organization of all OSCs trained to perform all EPA duties; 2 new OSCs were promoted to Team-Leader positions: Tito Irizarry for

Emergency Response and Cosmo Caterino for Counter-Terrorism and Homeland Security. DNC preparedness activities and ICS training and implementation, and a new decon system training were discussed. Six 1-2 day training sessions are planned for 2005. Contact Art Johnson, EPA, if interested in participating in any of the training sessions. On-going are site cleanup actions in all 6 New England states, including stabilization of a mine tailings pile in VT, and cleanups at a papermill in Brewer, ME and the Troy Mills landfill (10,000 buried drums) in NH.

EPA OSC Ted Bzenas reported on the Sept. '04 training (two weeks total) in Dallas, TX, for ICS. Fire Service personnel led the training. The EPA-led PREP exercise in Oct '04 was a success due to good partnership with the USCG. For anyone interested in the Level A drill on Dec. 1,2 '04 at the Stowe, MA fire dept. facility, contact Art Johnson.

EPA OSC Melanie Morash reported that the EPA conducted 3 unannounced drills in Sept. at inland Facility Response Plan (FRP) facilities. During the FY'05 the drills will be coordinated with the USCG. The EPA OSC will be continuing to conduct SPCC/FRP inspections at EPA's FRP bulk oil storage facilities and will coordinate with the Coast Guard for those in the Coastal Zone. They would like to renew annual RRT call-down exercises.

NOAA Steve Lehmann discussed reorganization of NOAA ORR and HAZMAT to improve coordination between emergency response and long-term natural resource restoration.

DHHS & ATSDR Gary Perlman reported on the deployment at G-8 summit, DNC, RNC and technical support provided at RI mercury release, Ricin incidents, M/V RIO PUELO incident, and the Reagan funeral.

DOI reports Minerals Management Service will be reviewing response plans for wind power facilities. They are preparing for CANUSLANT 2005 exercise and DNC preparedness activities. DOI will also be reviewing permits for LNG pipelines and wind power facilities.

DHS/FEMA reports on the FEMA/EPA interagency agreement. DHS will be conducting NIMS roll out training in groups to meet in Chicago on Nov 10, Albany on Nov. 30 and Dec. 1, Dallas on Dec. 1,2, and Orlando on Dec 12, 13. The National-level MSEL conference will be held in Crystal City, VA next week for TOPOFF 3. TOPOFF 3 is to be enacted in "real-time." The training course will be held April 18-22. Prerequisites are IS 700 and ICS Level 300. ICS, 100 and 200 levels are available on-line. 300 levels will be made available through FEMA. ICS worked well as organizational structure for hurricane response, but community outreach efforts needed to be improved.

DOL/OSHA reported on TOPOFF 3 development activities, emergency responses, the integrating of normal day-to-day response operations with ICS structure and a developed Regional Emergency Response Plan

USDA Lisa Murphy reported on a nation-wide monitoring of cattle for BFC starting in November. On Nov. 30, there is an exercise on avian illness (bird flu) involving USDA, MADPH, and Department of Agriculture. They are looking to develop response plan for MA. On March 21-23 a US/CAN exercise involving foot/mouth disease will be conducted. VT, NH, and ME Emergency Management Agencies are to be activated.

CANUSLANT 2005 was discussed by Scott Lundgren of the USCG. The Cross-border exercise is to be conducted from June 13-16, 2005 in Bar Harbor, ME at the College of the Atlantic. The Atlantic Geographic Annex was signed at the Oct 19-21 Joint Response Team meeting and will focus on the issue of places of refuge for vessels in distress. See <http://www.uscg.mil/d1/staff/m/jrt>

Endangered Species Act (ESA) Consultation Update discussed by Scott Lundgren, of the USCG, provided brief background on the requirements on OSCs to consult during response with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries regarding endangered species. He specifically addressed the work the RRT began prior to the B120 spill in Buzzard's Bay, and how B120 formal consultation overtook the general planning efforts. With completion of the consultation for the B120 spill, a small group is convening in December to apply the ESA lessons learned to adjust the regional planning approach. Scott will keep the RRT posted on progress of this regional effort.

A recommendation to develop a national approach to Endangered Species Act (ESA) consultations, possibly by a national ESA expert, was approached. A recommendation to practice/conduct tabletop exercises involving response scenarios with endangered species, cultural, historic, etc. impacts were brought up. These recommendations will be shared with national ESA MOA contacts.

Long Island Sound Buckeye Pipeline Incident was discussed by LT Mark Shepard of the USCG. On July 11, 2004 a release of 40,000 gallons of mixed oil products from a ruptured buried pipeline spilled onto land and water. The RP led the cleanup.

Change in EPA/USCG Boundary was discussed by Art Johnson of the EPA. Jurisdictional boundary books were distributed to the USCG COTPs and states. The EPA is requesting a representative from each State and USCG Sector to clarify boundaries for a workgroup. Contact Melanie Morash at EPA at 617-918-1298.

RRT Data Collection/Suggestion Exercise LTJG Barry Breslin, USCG, collected suggestions from the RRT concerning future meeting topics, elements of the RRT/meeting procedures that are working well and elements of the RRT/meeting procedures that they would like to see changed. The Co-chairs will review the data collected and feedback will be provided by the next meeting.

Action Items

Top suggestions posed to the group:

Boundary workgroup formation - rep from each State and USCG Sector to clarify EPA/CG boundaries and provide mechanism for transfer of FOSC authority between EPA and USCG. If interested contact Melanie Morash (EPA) at 617-918-1298.

If interested in developing and participating in a workgroup and workplan on the Oil Spill Applied Technologies Selection Guide, contact Steve Lehmann (NOAA).

RRT 1 will schedule a conference call for the RRT in January 2004 to identify priority action items and follow-ups. Recommendations have been made to post RRT meeting summaries and after-action/follow-up items on RRT website along with creating a training/exercise calendar, to be posted on the RRT website.

Upcoming Events and Special Interest Items

Date	Event/ Location	Contact
Nov '04 - Jan '05	NRP national rollout activities begin. All agencies are asked to participate. Activities include: Education and training for responders and stakeholders in Miami, New York City, Chicago, Seattle, and Los Angeles. Initial Awareness level training on CD-ROM available at the time the NRP is released. Agencies will have 120 days from NRP rollout to amend interagency response plans (NCP) to align with NRP.	
Dec. 1-2 '04	Level A drill. EPA is sponsoring six 1-2 day HAZMAT training sessions for 2005. Location: Stowe, MA fire dept. facility	Melanie Morash, EPA
December '04	USCG, NFWS, NOAA is holding a meeting on the Endangered Species Act	Scott Lundgren, USCG
March '05	NRT/RRT Co-Chairs Meeting	
March 21-23	US/CAN exercise involving foot/mouth disease. VT, NH, and ME Emergency Management Agencies are to be activated	Lisa Murphy at USDA if interested in participating.
April 18-22	FEMA training course. Prerequisites are IS 700, Level 300 ICS. Levels 100 and 200 available on-line. Level 300 to be made available through FEMA	FEMA Region 1
June 13-16, 2005	Cross-border CANUSLANT exercise Location: Bar Harbor, ME at the College of the Atlantic	
September 05	USCG MSO Providence - upcoming PREP exercise with MOTIVA	
FY05	EPA-led unannounced drills for to be coordinated with USCG	

FY05	Will be renewing annual RRT call-down exercises	
FY05	EPA-sponsored training courses	If agencies are interested in hosting trainings contact Pauline Callahan at EPA at 617-918-1192.